

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 RSR-01 /110 W

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R 181610 Z MAY 73

FM AMCONSUL NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4244

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS NASSAU 661

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS BF UK US

SUBJ: ABACO DEBATE

REF: LONDON 5390; NASSAU 546; STATE 80538

1. DURING MAY 16 HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON ABACO SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT, PM PINDLING ACCUSED ALLEGED US CITIZENS WERBELL AND MARGER (SEE REFTELS) OF AN UNLAWFUL ATTEMPT TO DISMEMBER THE BAHAMAS AND OF ACTING ON BEHALF OF NON- BAHAMIANS WITH CRIMINAL DESIGNS. PM ATTACKED ABACO SECESSIONIST MP ERRINGTON WATKINS FOR BEING PART OF CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE NATION AND ACCUSED THE COUNCIL FOR FREE ABACO OF PLANNING VIOLENCE.

2. PINDLING SAID HE HAD RELIABLE INFORMATION THAT WERBELL AND MARGER HAD A HISTORY OF ASSOCIATION WITH ATTEMPTS TO OVERTHROW FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. HE SAID HE REGRETTED THAT " THESE CITIZENS OF A COUNTRY WITH WHICH THE BAHAMAS HAS BEEN ON GOOD TERMS THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY" SHOULD NOW BE INVOLVED IN SUCH UNLAWFUL ACTS AGAINST BAHAMIAN SOVEREIGNTY. WATKINS DEFENDED HIMSELF AGAINST IMPLICATION THAT HE WOULD EVER BE INVOLVED IN VIOLENCE AGAINST BAHAMAS AND ADMITTED KNOWING WERBELL FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS, BUT WAS EVASIVE IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT WEAPONS PURCHASES. (NOTE: MAY 18 MIAMI HER-
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ALD REPORTS THAT WERBELL AND MARGER INTEND TO FILE A 10 MIL-
LION DOLLAR LIBEL SUIT AGAINST PINDLING FOR HIS REMARKS.)

3. LOCAL PRESS HAS GIVEN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO MIAMI HERALD
AND LONDON DAILY MIRROR ACCOUNTS OF WERBELL'S AND MARGER'S
PURPORTED ACTIVITIES PAST AND PRESENT, TO THE MAY 15 BRITISH
HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE ON INDEPENDENCE BILL, AND TO REPORTS
THAT TORY MP COLIN "MAD MITCH" MITCHELL STATES HE MAY COME
TO ABACO BEFORE OR JUST AFTER INDEPENDENCE TO DEAL WITH A
"SECURITY PROBLEM". IN MAY 13 LONDON OBSERVER, HUGH O' SHAUGH-
NESSY SUGGESTS THAT OFFICIAL U. S. INVOLVEMENT WITH THE ABACO
SECESSIONISTS SEEMS A STRONG POSSIBILITY AND THAT CIA MAY
BE ONE BACKER OF MOVEMENT.
SPEAR

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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Disposition Action: n/a
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Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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